

REMARKS

The pending Office Action address claims 1-21, 27, and 28. Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17, 18, 21, 27, and 28 stand rejected. Applications appreciate the Examiner's allowance of claims 20, and the Examiner's indication that claims 7, 16, and 19 are allowable and would be allowed if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Rejections

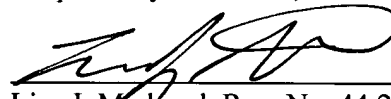
Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17, 18, 21, 27, and 28 stand rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,629,534 of St. Goar et al. (St. Goar).

Applicant encloses a Rule 131 Declaration of Randall Y. Grimes, which establishes that the invention claimed in the present application was completed in the United States before the April 9, 1999 filing date of the St. Goar application. This declaration is believed to eliminate the St. Goar application as prior art and therefore withdrawal of the pending rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and remarks above, Applicants submit that claims 1-21 and 27-28 are in condition for allowance. In the event that the above amendments and remarks are not deemed to place this case in condition for allowance, an opportunity to interview with the Examiner is requested. Applicants encourage the Examiner to telephone the undersigned upon receipt of this response to discuss any issues that may remain.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa J. Michaud, Reg. No. 44,238
Attorney for Applicant(s)

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Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP
World Trade Center West
155 Seaport Boulevard
Boston, MA 02210
Tel: (617) 439-2550
Fax: (617) 310-9550